

NSC BRIEFING

LEBANON

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No Change in Class. ☐

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- I. Lebanon is returning to more normal life under what Mr. Rountree calls an "energetic and streamlined government."
 - A. Despite necessary gestures Karame and others have made to Arab neutralism, there seems to be warm regard for US in this little country.
 - B. Major factor in this regard was our military intervention, which is generally recognized as having constructively changed the course of events in the Middle East and which was carried out with a bare minimum of friction with the local population--many of whom in fact welcomed our boys.
 - C. Rountree on recent visit also found many responsible Lebanese leaders fully conscious of overall threat of aggressive communism.
 1. Note Arab nationalist press in Beirut has taken up theme that Arab world must be defended against communism and that US policy should be more effective in this respect.
 - D. Lebanon of course still has many problems, chief of which is that Moslem and Christian elements in population are not really reconciled. Economic problems of fairly basic kind also arise because planned economies of neighboring states have cut off free transit trade on which country relies heavily.